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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MADRID 002182

SIPDIS

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P FOR SUMONA GUHA
EUR/SE FOR PAUL MALIK
DRL/AE FOR SUSAN CORKE
USOSCE FOR KYLE SCOTT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/30/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [OSCE](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: OSCE MINISTERIAL: U/S BURNS' MEETING WITH TURKISH
FM BABACAN

Classified By: CDA Hugo Llorens for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) SUMMARY: In a November 29 bi-lateral meeting, U/S Burns and DAS Bryza met with FM Ali Babacan and the Turkish delegation at the OSCE Ministerial in Madrid in a productive exchange on critical issues: Annapolis Summit, Kosovo final status, and Turkey's relations with Cyprus. On Annapolis Summit: FM Babacan was extremely pleased with the central and strategic role that Turkey was able to play in contributing to what he views as a very successful outcome in Annapolis. He praised Secretary Rice for the inclusiveness of the process, setting dates for follow-up, and discussing final status. Babacan sees this as evidence that Turkey has the capacity to play an integral balancing role in the Middle East Peace Process and that Turkey is an "asset" that is ready to be of use to the United States for any crises in the region. On Kosovo, Turkey still hopes for a negotiated compromise, but knows that time is running out, and will immediately reevaluate. He was supportive (although non-committal) of the basic tenets of the U.S. approach that - sometime after December 10 and before the end of January - the U.S. and approximately 22 other European countries would recognize Kosovo's independence en masse. On relations with Greece overall Babacan was very positive, but Cyprus is still a festering issue. Babacan said it was time for the Cyprus issue to be revitalized and brought to a final comprehensive solution with the UN as the neutral negotiator; he was heartened by U/S Burns' and DAS Bryza's expression of U.S. support for this approach. END SUMMARY.

Turks Eager to Play Balancing Role, Annapolis as a Win-Win

12. (C) FM Babacan discussed the active role Turkey played in the region to help make the Annapolis Summit a success. In particular, Babacan and others conducted extensive travel throughout the Middle East, and encouraged others, including Syria and Saudi Arabia to support the plan for peace between Israel and Palestine. In addition he touted the historic joint invitation to Mahmoud Abbas and Shimon Peres, where both spoke to the Turkish Parliament on the same day and signed a statement creating a statement laying the basis for an Industrial Zone in the West Bank that provides business and jobs to all three parties, but especially, the Palestinians. Both leaders, along with Saudi King Abdullah, had spoken before the Turkish parliament in unprecedented appearances.

13. (C) Turkey was pleased to collect acknowledgment and

praise from all for the pivotal role it has played as a central point between the U.S., EU, and the Middle East. The Israelis thanked Turkey for bringing Syria in from the cold and even Syria was happy too. FM Babacan appreciated the personal thank you voiced by Secretary Rice. He noted that the EU progress report on Turkey also referenced that it was using its influence in the region in constructive ways on Middle East Peace Process and Iran.

14. (C) Now the challenge is moving to the implementation phase. Babacan sees the process itself, with follow-on meetings, as vitally important and positive as it will task each country to come back every few months to report progress. Russia's offer to host a follow-up meeting was viewed positively by Turkey.

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Last Minute Hopes For a Negotiated Compromise Fading On Kosovo
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15. (C) On Kosovo, FM Babacan opened by stating that he still hopes for a negotiated compromise as the best solution, but he understands that time is running out, and said Turkey would need to immediately reevaluate whether Turkey will be ready to join in with imminent recognition of Kosovo. U/S Burns described the current timeline: that after December 10 Kosovo would announce its independence and that between mid-late January the U.S. and approximately 22 European countries would all recognize Kosovo. U/S Burns notes that the actual date for Kosovo's independence announcement will not be made public until after Serbia announces its election date, so that Serbia cannot stall the process. Babacan was supportive (although non-committal) of the basic tenets of the U.S. approach.

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Relations on the Upswing With Greece; Cyprus Still an Issue
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16. (C) Greek and Turkish relations are at a high point. Babacan will visit Athens next week to prepare for Greek Prime Minister Karamanlis' visit to Ankara in the spring; the first such visit in 49 years.

17. (C) Babacan said it would be time for the Cyprus issue to be revitalized, after the Greek Cypriot elections, with all of the issues brought to the table, in pursuit of a comprehensive settlement. The EU is not in a position to be a fair and neutral middle party on the issue due to Cyprus' EU membership. There needs to be a final comprehensive solution with the UN acting as the neutral negotiator. Babacan was heartened by U/S Burns' and DAS Bryza's expression of U.S. agreement that the U.S. would continue pressing to reduce isolation of the Turkish Cypriots and that the U.S. would work through the UN to come up with a comprehensive solution that is fair to both sides. U/S Burns said that in March, after Greek Cypriot elections, the U.S. would look to renewing efforts through the UN.

Participants

United States
Under Secretary Burns
Deputy Assistant Secretary Bryza
Special Assistant Sumona Guha
DRL/AE: Susan Corke

Turkey
Foreign Minister Babacan
Ambassador Yusuf Buluc
Murat Salim Esenli, Minister Plenipotentiary, Deputy Director General
Levent Bilman, Minister Plenipotentiary, MFA Spokesman

Erkan Aytun, Counsellor, Embassy of Turkey in Madrid
LLORENS